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SUBJECT: CDA CALLS ON YOUNG PAP CHAIRMAN TEO SER LUCK

Classified By: CDA Daniel Shields for Reasons 1.4 b/d.

11. (C) Summary: Young People's Action Party (YP) Chairman Teo Ser Luck expressed a positive view to CDA regarding YP exchanges with the Chinese Communist Youth League (CYL) and CYL First Secretary Lu Hao. Singapore, as it prepares to host the 2010 Youth Olympic Games, is interested in learning from Beijing's experience in hosting the 2008 Olympics. The YP is moving, in the wake of Teo's China trip for CYL exchanges, to strengthen the existing YP School. The YP would be interested in pursuing exchanges with a major U.S. party if there were interest on the U.S. side. Asked about YP involvement in social media, Teo said the YP is stepping up its efforts, trying to "be present without being seen." End Summary.

12. (C) CDA, joined by EP Counselor and Public Affairs Counselor, called April 3 on Young People's Action Party (Young PAP or YP) Chairman Teo Ser Luck, accompanied by YP International Relations Subcommittee Chair Joel Leong and YP Women Vice Chair Elaina Olivia Chong. The CDA asked Teo about his visit to China in February for exchanges with Communist Youth League counterparts. Teo said with a laugh that the YP is not going Communist, although he confirmed, with apparent embarrassment, that YP members still follow PAP tradition and call each other "comrade" in certain formal settings. Teo had become interested in stepping up exchanges with the CYL as a result of his experience working with the CYL on Olympics-related issues. Teo is deeply involved in Olympics-related matters, including preparations for Singapore's hosting the 2010 Youth Olympics Games (YOG), in his capacity as Senior Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS). Teo said he has a high opinion of CYL First Secretary Lu Hao. Lu indicated to Teo that it would be better if the CYL head did not come from a background, like Lu's, as a government official. Teo took this as indication of Lu's relatively open-minded perspective. Singapore, as it prepares to host the 2010 YOG, is interested in learning from Beijing's experience in hosting the 2008 Olympics, Teo stated.

13. (C) CDA inquired about press reports that the YP's exchanges with the CYL had encouraged the YP to increase its political education efforts. Teo responded that the YP is moving, in the wake of the China trip, to strengthen the existing YP School. Teo's own preference had been to move to establish an actual bricks-and-mortar school, but his YP colleagues had persuaded him to keep the YP School virtual, as other YP institutions are. Teo said he had personally recruited for the party the new head of the YP School. (Note: Per press reports, the head of the YP School is Martin Tan, 32, a youth leadership trainer who was brought into the party by Teo.)

14. (C) CDA asked Teo about YP exchanges with parties in countries other than China. Teo said the YP would be interested in pursuing exchanges with a major U.S. party if there were interest of the U.S. side. He praised the accomplishments of American parties in motivating young people to get out and cast their votes, noting that in Singapore voting is compulsory, so it is hard to assess how motivated the voters actually are. He said the YP has

learned much from the American parties about how to use social media. At present, he said, the YP's international exchanges mainly involve parties in ASEAN countries. The YP is looking forward to renewing exchanges with UMNO in Malaysia once the new UMNO team gets settled in. The YP is interested in exchanges with Indonesia, but there are so many parties contending for power in Indonesia it is difficult for the YP to identify an appropriate partner. The YP has exchange relationships with the ruling parties in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, he stated.

15. (C) Asked about YP involvement in social media, Teo said the YP is stepping up its efforts, seeking to "be present without being seen." The YP does not use the term "new media" because there is nothing new about the Internet. Still, in the past, the PAP was not paying enough attention to such media. In the general elections in 2006, if presence on the Internet had translated into votes, the opposition could have won the elections, but in fact the PAP garnered 67 percent of the vote. Today, the PAP and the YP are experimenting with all media to communicate policy messages in a manner appropriate to the medium, with respect for diversity of views. Even with Twitter, it is possible to communicate the gist of a policy message in 140 characters, Teo said, noting that his own efforts in this area had generated a significant response. Teo said only by making full use of technology can he manage his five portfolios: PAP Central Executive Committee Member, Young PAP Chairman, Senior Parliamentary Secretary in MCYS, Senior Parliamentary

Secretary in the Ministry of Transport, and, as a result of the March 26 Cabinet reshuffle, Mayor for Northeast Community Development.

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